The A. F. of L. Wee... News Service gives a brief summary of important matters affecting labor, occurring in the industrial, legislative and judicial fields, and such other information that will benefit the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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Heaven never helps a man who will not act.—Shakespeare.

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Business Men Use Foreign Ships; Ignore Vessels Of Their Country

Washington, July 7.—American ships carry less than one-half of this country's exports, said Alfred H. Hoag, director of the bureau of research of the United States Shipping Board.

Of the total vessels engaged in this business, those of the British flag far outnumber American ships. There are 1,675 American vessels of 7,000,000 gross tons being operated and these carry less than 34 per cent of the foreign commerce.

Four years ago Chairman T. V. O'Connor of the Shipping Board addressed a personal letter to importers and exporters in the Philadelphia district asking them to patronize ships flying the flag of their country.

The interlocking interests of American railroads and other business interests with foreign ship owners was shown by Senator Ransdell in a Senate speech November 3, 1921. The Louisiana lawmaker exposed "patriots" who have a community of interests with foreign commercial and financial groups.

Senator Ransdell called attention to contracts between a score of large railroad systems and foreign shipping lines. The railroads agreed they will use their best efforts to secure freight for the foreign companies to the exclusion of others. Exclusive use of facilities is granted in many cases, free wharfage and freight handling is given, special arrangements on through bills of lading are made, and many other privileges are accorded.

The contract between the Pennsylvania railroad and Furness, Withy & Co., a British corporation, provides: "That each party will use their best efforts to promote the interchange of business tributary to both companies as against their individual and mutual competitors."

"The most amazing aspect of the situation," said Senator Ransdell, "is that the railroads, supplied with funds from the United States Treasury, have been utilizing their resources to build up the business and swell the profits of foreign competitors of the government's shipping. In other words, the government of the United States is placed in the position of using its money to foster competition with itself.

"How are we to escape the conclusion that the American merchant marine has powerful enemies at home working to destroy it?"

Power Trust Operates Secretly; "Fixers" Are In Every Activity

Washington, July 7.—The Federal Trade Commission's probe of the public utilities has revealed a stupendous attempt to undermine government, said Senator Norris in a public statement.

Nothing can compare with the secret machinations of this gigantic power monopoly, said Mr. Norris.

"It is poisoning the minds of youth through the secret control of text books in our public schools.

"It has reached its deceitful hand into the church and has undertaken to bribe the minister in his pulpit. It has crept in the back door of state universities and colleges to practice deception upon the coming generation. It has invaded the secret halls of fraternal societies, spreading its evil influence. It has crept into such organizations as the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts of America. It has, with deception and bribery, undertaken to influence state legislatures.

"By the expenditure of huge sums of money it has undertaken to buy seats in the United States Senate and, by the greatest lobby that has ever been gotten together in Capital City, it has expended untold sums for the control of our national legislature. It has been spending and is spending annually millions of dollars to control every avenue of government from road overseer to the White House.

"It has done this, in the main, by secret and underhand methods, and every cent of the money that it has dishonorably, unpatriotically and deceitfully used, it has wrung from the people of the United States in exorbitant public utility rates. It has used the money of the people to deceive the people."

SMALLER STOCK SELLING IS GOOD MONEY GETTER

New York, July 7.—The Pennsylvania Railroad will sell $17,500,000 of new stock to officers and employes. The price is $50 a share and no one can buy more than ten shares. Payments are to be made by $2 or $5 deductions from the monthly pay roll. As no employe or officer can pay for the stock in a lump sum it will take from 10 to 25 months to pay for one share.

The total number of new shares will be 350,000. If all officers and employes avail themselves of their new privilege, the average number of shares per person will not exceed two.

This system of financing was developed by the public utilities following the World War. Aside from the value of floating stock issues, it ties stockholders to the company.

Workers are less prone to change employment or make demand for improved conditions, and stockholders in public utilities will except increased rates and oppose municipal ownership. Records of July, 1926, show there were 11,842,410 customer owners of public utility stock throughout the country.

The corporations call this system "a development of much better relations with their customers and employes."

RETIREMENT LAW HELD AUTOMATIC

Washington, July 7.—The Civil Service Commission has ruled that there will be no deviation of the retirement law, which calls for automatic separation of employes after August 30, 1930.

The law permits for continuance in the service beyond retirement age by periods not exceeding two years, and has the following limitation upon continuances:

"Provided, however, that after August 30, 1930, no employe shall be continued in the civil service of the United States beyond the age of retirement for more than four years."

The commission says it was the clear intention of Congress to require the separation at the close of August 30, 1930, of all employes who on that date will be eligible for annuity and who will be four years or more beyond the retirement age.

WIRE-TAPPING CASE REHEARING URGED

Washington, July 7.—The Supreme Court is asked to reconsider its decision in the wire-tapping case in which it upheld a conviction for violating the federal prohibition law.

The court, by a 5-to-4 decision, held that evidence obtained by government agents by listening to conversations over the telephone could be used in criminal prosecutions.

INVESTORS PROSPER

New York, July 7.—Investors will receive approximately $719,000,000 in dividends and interest during July. This is a new high record and compares with $651,853,000 paid in July, last year.

MEXICO'S PRESIDENT TO HAVE WIDE POWERS

Washington, July 7.—Press dispatches from Mexico announce the election of General Alvaro Obregon as president of Mexico and that the new official has been granted powers that border on dictatorship.

General Obregon's amendments to the constitution have been ratified by the necessary number of state legislatures, it is stated. One amendment provides for the appointment of supreme judges and other judges by the president, instead of election by the people.

Mayors and boards of aldermen, formerly elected by the people, will be replaced by federal commissions. The number of deputies in the national assembly will also be reduced from 300 to 156.

The labor party has had control of city governments, but these will now pass into the hands of the new president.

HAZARDS TO HEALTH FROM DUST STUDIED

Washington, July 7.—Hazards to health from dust in six industries will be studied by the United States Public Health Service. The selected industries are: Cement, representing calcium dust; silver polish, metal dust; granite, silica dust; hard coal, carbon dust; cotton, vegetable dust, and street sweeping, municipal dust.

"The health hazards of dusty trades have for a long time engaged the attention of industrial hygienists," said Dr. Hugh S. Cumming, surgeon general of the Public Health Service. "The great interest attached to this subject is due to two important facts: (1) The workmen employed in what are termed the 'dusty trades' comprise the largest group of workers exposed to any one industrial hazard, and (2) exposure to certain kinds of dust has strikingly increased the mortality rate from respiratory diseases, especially tuberculosis."

TEACHERS RE-ELECT

Chicago, July 7.—Miss Mary C. Barker and Mrs. Florence C. Hanson were re-elected president and secretary-treasurer of the American Federation of Teachers at their convention in this city.

A feature of the convention was President Barker's plea for education uncontrolled by privilege.

"Shall the schools of the people become the vehicles in which special interest may parade before impressionable youth their particular adaptation of the drama in human affairs?" she asked.

"Shall youth, unsuspecting and defenseless, committed by society to the teacher for his quest of truth, be met at the threshold of his career by a person who carries in his soul, if not in his pocket, a commission to divert that youth into conformity with some particular group thought?"

SEEK SHORT WEEK

San Francisco, July 7.—The convention of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen indorsed the principle of a shorter week and authorized an educational campaign to secure necessary legislation.

Labor and the Political Conventions

What Labor Asked	Reply of Democrats	Reply of Republicans
Amendment of the Sherman anti-trust act that labor, industry and agriculture may develop along normal, constructive lines.	Labor is not a commodity. Human rights must be safeguarded. Labor should be exempt from the operation of anti-trust laws.	
Legislation to define the jurisdiction of equity courts and prevent the issuance of injunctions against labor in industrial disputes.	We recognize that legislative and other investigations have shown the existence of grave abuse in the issuance of injunctions in labor disputes. No injunctions should be granted in labor disputes except upon proof of threatened irreparable injury and after notice and hearing, and the injunction should be confined to those acts which do directly threaten irreparable injury. The express purpose of representative capital, labor and the law to devise a plan for the elimination of the present evils with respect to injunctions must be supported and legislation designed to accomplish these ends formulated and passed.	We believe that injunctions in labor disputes have in some instances been abused and have given rise to a serious question for legislation.
Recognition of the right of working men and women to organize in trade unions and engage in the normal activities of unions.	We favor the principle of collective bargaining and the Democratic principle that organized labor should choose its own representatives without coercion or interference.	The party favors freedom in wage contracts, the right of collective bargaining by free and responsible agents of their own choosing, which develops and maintains that purposeful cooperation which gains its chief incentive through voluntary agreement.
Continuation of present restrictive immigration policy and its progressive application as further needs develop.	Laws which limit immigration must be preserved in full force and effect.	Republican party believes that in the interest of both native and foreign-born wage earners it is necessary to restrict immigration. Unrestricted immigration would result in widespread unemployment and in the breakdown of the American standard of living.
		The party is anxious, hopeful and willing to assist in any feasible plan for the stabilization of the coal-mining industry which will work with justice to the miners, consumers and producers.
Constructive legislation for rehabilitation of the coal industry.	Bituminous coal is not only the common base of manufacture, but is a vital agency in our interstate transportation. The demoralization of this industry, its labor conflicts and distress, its waste of a national resource and disordered public service, demand constructive legislation that will allow capital and labor a fair share of prosperity with adequate protection to the consuming public.	
Ratification of the Federal Child Labor Amendment.	Children are the chief asset of the nation. Therefore, their protection through infancy and childhood against exploitation is an important national duty. (This plank declares that "the Democratic party has always opposed the exploitation of women in industry and has stood for such conditions of work as will preserve their health and strength. We favor an equal wage for equal service and likewise favor adequate appropriations for the Women's and Children's Bureau.")	
Federal legislation to enable states to prohibit within their jurisdictions the sale of goods manufactured by convict labor in other states.	We favor legislation providing that products of convict labor shipped from one state to another shall be subject to laws of the latter state as though they had been produced therein.	
Advance planning of public works to provide authorization and finances so that work may be initiated promptly as unemployment increases and thus not compete with demands for workers in private employment.	Unemployment is present, widespread and increasing. We favor the adoption by the government, after a study of this subject, of a scientific plan whereby during periods of unemployment appropriations shall be made available for the construction of necessary public works and the lessening, as far as is consistent with public interests, of government construction work when labor is generally and satisfactorily employed in private enterprise. Study should also be made of modern methods of industry and a constructive solution found to absorb and utilize the surplus human labor released by the increasing use of machinery.	
Rehabilitation of injured service men.	We pledge the veterans that none of the benefits heretofore accorded by the Wilson administration and the votes of Democratic members of Congress shall be withdrawn; that these will be added to more in accordance with veterans and their dependents' actual needs.	Full and adequate relief for our disabled veterans is our aim, and we commend the action of Congress in further liberalizing the laws applicable to veterans' relief.
More adequate accident compensation for government workers.	We favor legislation making fair and liberal compensation to government employes who are injured in accident or by occupational disease and to the dependents of such workers as may die as a result thereof.	
Reaffirmation of the rights of free speech, press and assemblage and the exercise of these rights.	Human rights must be safeguarded.	
Opposition to industrial conscription at any time, and opposition to conscription for army and navy service except in a defensive war.		We believe that in time of war the nation should draft for its defense not only its citizens but also every resource which may contribute to success. The country demands that should the United States ever again be called upon to defend itself by arms, the President be empowered to draft such material resources and such services as may be required, and to stabilize the prices of services and essential commodities, whether utilized in actual warfare or private activity.
Five-day week for government employes.		
The principle of high wages and against reduction of daily and annual income of the working people.	Tariff legislation will be based "on maintenance of legitimate business and a high standard of wages for American labor."	The Republican party pledges itself to continue its efforts to maintain this present standard of living and high wage scale.
Increased pay for civilian employes of the government and satisfactory classification.	Federal employes should receive a living wage based upon American standards of decent living. Present wages are in many instances far below that standard.	Steps have already been taken by the Republican Congress to make the service more attractive as to wages and retirement privileges, and we commend what has been done as a step in the right direction.
Amendment to the Volstead act to permit manufacture and sale of beer containing not more than 2.75 per cent alcohol.		
Liberalization of the Federal retirement law to provide adequate income for old age.	We favor a fair and liberal retirement law for government employes in the classified service.	Steps have already been taken by the Republican Congress to make the service more attractive as to wages and retirement privileges, and we commend what has been done as a step in the right direction.
Payment of the prevailing rate of wages on work done under government contract and that citizens of the state in which the work is done be employed.		
Graduated income, estate and inheritance taxes against sales tax or other methods placing the burden on those least able to bear it.		

WHY MEN LEAVE FARMS

Washington, July 7.—"Inability to make both ends meet" is the largest single factor in causing people to leave farms, while old age may be taken as the second largest, according to a survey by the Department of Agriculture.

Twenty thousand former farmers were questioned. One-third left farming because it was "a poor business," while one-fourth based their departure on old age and the inability to carry on under its attendant liabilities.

OPERATE CO-OP. PLANT

San Francisco, July 7.—A cooperative shop is operated by Upholsterers' Union No. 28.

UNION CAMPAIGN IN READING PROVES WORKERS WILL UNITE

Reading, Pa., July 7.—The local trade union movement is in the midst of one of the most extensive organizing campaigns ever witnessed in an American municipality.

The drive is sponsored by the A. F. of L., the State Federation of Labor and the Reading Federated Council.

Mayor Stump and City Councilmen George Snyder and James H. Maurer are taking an active part in the campaign and act as chairman of meetings. The meetings are held outdoors and the police direct traffic from the gatherings. Noon-day meetings are held at mill gates.

The speakers emphasize poor economic conditions in Reading, where the average wage is $22.25, against a state average of $26.36. The minimum required for health and decency is $42.80, the speakers point out. The position of children in industry is also brought to the workers' attention.

The unionists have rented a calliope to advertise the meetings.

A weekly newspaper, "The Reading Unionist," is published during the campaign under the direction of John W. Edelman, research director of the American Federation of Full Fashioned Hosiery Workers. More than 30,000 copies of the paper are distributed by volunteers.

Several unions have been organized. At each meeting workers fill out cards and return to the chairman or mail to campaign headquarters. These cards, which indicate the workers' willingness to join a union, are treated in confidence and are an aid to organizers.

Representatives of more than a score of A. F. of L. national and international affiliates are assisting in the campaign.

UNIONISTS WANT VOICE IN ADMINISTERING LAW

Montreal, Quebec, July 7.—Organized labor made sharp answer to the refusal of the Minister of Public Works and Labor to appoint a trade unionist on the Workmen's Compensation Commission.

The government official talks about "class representation," but is willing to appoint a unionist on the advisory board of the commission.

The executive committee of the Trades and Labor Council reported to that body:

"In so far as the reference to class representation is concerned, we can not but assume that the advisory commission comes within that category in its entirety. Furthermore, it is difficult to reconcile the position taken by the government which, while recognizing the ability of the workers to act in an advisory capacity refuses to recognize their ability to administer."

WAR ON BLINDNESS WAGED BY SOCIETY

New York, July 7.—Remarkable progress in 20 years' organized efforts to reduce the frequency of blindness in America, pointing to possible elimination of the principal disease causing blindness and the reduction of eye injuries to a minimum, is shown by a report of the National Society for the Prevention of Blindness.

The greatest single achievement has been in the field of ophthalmia neonatorum, commonly known as "babies' sore eyes," the society reports. As a result of adoption of laws, in most states, requiring doctors, nurses, or others in attendance to put prophylactic drops in the eyes of babies at birth and the constant educational activities of the society, the report states, the frequency of ophthalmia neonatorum as a cause of blindness among those admitted to schools for the blind has diminished each year until now it is 64 per cent less than in 1908.

STATE WITHOUT POWER OVER INTERSTATE BUS

Dallas, Texas, July 7.—Federal Judge Atwill was ruled that the State Railroad Commission can not interfere with a bus company that operates between points in this state and California.

The commission refused a license to a company on the ground that it had not filed a financial statement to show it is responsible for injuries to passengers or the public on highways. This refusal was an interference with interstate commerce, the court said.

FEWER INFANT DEATHS PREDICTED BY DAVIS

Washington, July 7.—A downward trend in infant mortality was predicted by Secretary of Labor Davis in a letter to Senator Sheppard of Texas. The cabinet official said: "The Federal Children's Bureau, which keeps in close touch with matters of this kind, and which has had the administration of the Maternity and Infancy Act, attributes a large part of the reduction in infant mortality to the operation of the act of which you were co-author."

BRITISH UNIONISTS INDORSE PEACE PLAN

London, England, July 7.—The General Council of the British Trades Union Congress has approved a plan for the establishment of a national industrial council to set up conciliation boards.

The plan was evolved by a group of trade union officials and employers who have discussed industrial peace since last January.

The conciliation boards would investigate such trade disputes as might be referred to them before a lockout or strike is declared. Communists oppose the proposal.

TOO MUCH FRENCH COAL

Paris, July 7.—French coal owners are puzzled how to curtail output. For the first time French production equals consumption and imported coal is threatening to break the market.

Other countries face the same problem. It is estimated that the European surplus is between 60 and 70 million tons a year.

FAMILY BEST PLACE TO TRAIN CHILDREN

Washington, July 7.—There is no adequate substitute for the family as an institution for the nurture and training of children, according to Miss Katherine F. Lenroot, assistant to the chief of the United States Children's Bureau.

Miss Lenroot urges the care and protection of dependent children in their own homes and traces recent developments in this phase of welfare work.

The statement refutes claims of opponents of the Children's Bureau that that governmental unit would control children, rather than be helpful to them and their parents.

"In spite of the disturbances to which family life has been subjected by rapidly changing conditions of the modern world," said Miss Lenroot, "I believe that its fundamental basis is today exactly what it has been through the ages. No adequate substitution for the family as an institution for the nurture and training of children has yet been found, and I venture to assert that none will be found so long as life as we know it exists upon this planet.

"One of the hopeful signs in family life is the eager desire of parents for knowledge that will help them to be more understanding and more efficient fathers and mothers. Another is the increasing insistence upon the conservation of the home as the primary objective of all movements for the care and protection of children."

$1,000,000 BACK WAGE WILL BE PAID WORKERS

New York, July 7.—This city will pay $1,000,000 back wages to more than 3,600 claimants. This is the difference in pay of mechanics between what they received from the city and what they should have received under a state law calling for the payment of prevailing rates.

The painters in the Department of Plant and Structures carried the case to the United States Supreme Court, where the law was upheld. Individual amounts run from $200 to $2,000.

The Supreme Court decided that the claimants were entitled to the difference in pay only in cases where they signed the payroll under protest. Mechanics who accepted the wages offered by the city without protest have no basis for recovery.

The New York state law provides that on public work municipalities must pay the wage rate prevailing locally. The Supreme Court recently annulled the Arizona prevailing wage law, but this applied to private contractors doing public work. In the New York case the municipality was the employer.

TEXTILE MILL BARONS CAN'T FORCE WAGE CUT

New Bedford, Mass., July 7.—The 26 strike-closed mills in this city will be reopened, according to the New Bedford Cotton Manufacturers' Association.

The employers say they wish "to meet the desires of those who have urged reopening in the interest of the number who want to return to work."

The workers declare that the attempt to break the strike will fail. The mills manufacture a high grade of goods, and a comparatively small group of trained trade unionists are key men to the situation.

The strikers deny that there is a demand for the mills being reopened, and they point to the city-wide support of their resistance against wage cuts.

When the strike was called an organization dual to the legitimate United Textile Workers' Union functioned, but these workers have since joined the regular trade union.

CONVICT MINE LABOR HAS ENDED IN ALABAMA

Birmingham, Ala., July 7.—Seven hundred convicts permanently left the coal mines of this state for state farms and road camps.

Alabama is now rid of an issue that has been before the people for 15 years. The convict leasing system was fought through the administration of four governors, and has been the subject of heated controversy and bitter feeling. Public sentiment crystalized against the system after the alleged murder of James Knox, a convict, by one of the prison wardens. The trial revealed that other prisoners had been cruelly treated. The state legislature abolished the system in January, last year.

MICHIGAN UTILITIES ACTIVE IN SCHOOLS

Washington, July 7.—Michigan public utilities secretly operated through schools and newspapers, according to evidence submitted to the Federal Trade Commission.

"Social calls" were made on editors throughout the state "to see that everything was healthy as far as utilities were concerned."

AVERT STREET CAR STRIKE

New Haven, Conn., July 7.—A statewide poll of street car employes shows that a majority does not favor a strike at this time.